

*St Paul's, Clifton with Cotham Parish Church
Benefice service for Mothering Sunday 2020*

Nurturing Hope in a Hurting World

Welcome and Introduction

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Gathering Prayer

**Heavenly Father, we rejoice with thanks
for all those who have mothered us in our lives.
In a world that is broken and in need of your motherly love,
please use us to aid others as you do us
in providing comfort, nurture, protection and support.
We ask that you grow us as carers to those who need us,
so that we might celebrate your goodness together
even through our own brokenness. Amen**

Prayer of Preparation

Loving, compassionate Father,
As a mother gathers her children,
so you draw the whole human family to yourself.
Bring us together now, Lord,
that we may today and forever be united under your wing
in all our sorrows and joys. **Amen.**

Anthem: Ave Verum – sung by Margaret and Ginny

The Comfortable Words

Hear the words of comfort our Saviour Christ says to all who truly turn to him:
Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11.28

Silence for Reflection

Prayer of Penitence

Come let us return to the Lord and say:
**Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Absolution

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *us*,
pardon and deliver *us* from all *our* sins,
confirm and strengthen *us* in all goodness,
and keep *us* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Collect

Let us pray.
God of love, passionate and strong,
tender and careful:
watch over us and hold us
all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Canticle: Song of Anselm

**Response: Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.**

- 1 Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.
- 2 Often you weep over our sins and our pride,
tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgement.
- 3 You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds,
in sickness you nurse us, and with pure milk you feed us.

Response

- 4 Jesus, by your dying we are born to new life;
by your anguish and labour we come forth in joy.
- 5 Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

Response

- 6 Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.
- 7 Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.
- 8 In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.

Response

from Anselm of Canterbury

Gospel Reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Luke 2.25-35

Reflection

Litany for Mothers' Day

Eve: I am Eve. My son Cain killed his brother Abel because he was jealous.

We hold in mind mothers whose families are torn apart by jealousy, fighting and misunderstandings.

Noah's wife: I am Noah's wife. Although they all mocked us and called us mad, I and my family made our ark in God's name.

We hold in mind mothers who keep faith with God during frightening times

Sarah: I am Sarah. I was an old woman when I gave birth to my son Isaac.

We hold in mind mothers who are older, and who still bear the responsibility of raising children and grandchildren.

Rebekah: I am Rebekah. I helped my favourite son Jacob to trick his brother Esau out of his birthright.

We hold in mind mothers who inflame difficulties between their children

Rachel: I am Rachel, who thought my beloved son Joseph was lost and dead, before being reunited with him so many years later

We hold in mind mothers who go on waiting lovingly for their lost children

Moses' mother: I am Moses' mother. I hid my child so that he would not be taken by the government authorities.

We hold in mind mothers whose children are taken from them, or stolen from them

An Egyptian Princess: I am Pharaoh's daughter. I found a baby in a basket and adopted him, raising him as my own child.

We hold in mind mothers who have adopted children and mothers who have had their children adopted.

Ruth: I am Ruth who found a new relationship and bore a son, through caring for my mother in law

We hold in mind mothers whose care for others brings joy to them

Hannah: I am Hannah, the mother of Samuel. I was one of many women who had difficulty becoming a mother.

We hold in mind mothers who, after many disappointments, finally bear a child

Mother of David: I am the mother of David. I watched as my son grew from being a shepherd boy to become a great king.

We hold in mind mothers who rejoice in the achievements of their children.

Widow of Zarephath: I am the widow of Zarephath. When my bowl of flour and oil is gone, my child and I will die because our land is gripped by famine.

We hold in mind mothers who watch their children suffer and die from malnutrition because of famine, drought, flood or war.

Mother of Bethlehem: I am one of the mothers from Bethlehem. King Herod's soldiers murdered our children for no reason.

We hold in mind mothers whose children are tortured and murdered by soldiers and militia for political reasons.

Mother of Salem: I am a mother of Salem. I wanted to take my children to meet Jesus, but his disciples said not to bother him.

We hold in mind mothers who would like their children to know Jesus but are discouraged

Syrophoenician woman: I am the Syrophoenician woman. Even though Jesus referred to me as a dog, I pestered him to cure my daughter who was very ill.

We hold in mind mothers whose children are sick or disabled and who will try anything to cure or help them.

Widow at Nain: I am the widow at Nain. Jesus raised my son from the dead so I would not be left destitute.

We hold in mind mothers who, as widows, or for other reasons, raise their children alone.

Mother of James and John: I am the mother of James and John. I asked Jesus if they could have a special place next to him in Heaven.

We hold in mind mothers who believe their children can do no wrong and deserve special treatment

Mary: I am Mary. I watched my child suffer and die on a cross

We hold in mind mothers who watch their children suffer and die.

A woman without a child: I am one of many nameless women. I was not able to be a mother, even though I would have liked it very much.

We hold in mind women who, for various reasons, are unable to become mothers

Another woman without a child: I am a woman who chose not to become a mother.

We hold in mind women who, for various reasons, choose not to become mothers

Lois: I am Lois. Eunice and I taught Timothy, our son and grandson about Jesus.

We hold in mind mothers who teach their children about Jesus.

Lighting of Candles

You might light a candle to celebrate someone who has been like a mother, in the positive sense, to you, or as a symbol of forgiveness to someone who did not handle the task of mothering and caring well. You might light the candle for yourself, asking God to strengthen and guide you as a mothering and caring figure, or to remember someone who is in need of receiving love and care.

Prayers of Intercession

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son

our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Peace

Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be called children of God.

We meet in the name of Christ and share his peace.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer those with us, and each other a sign of peace.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours

now and for ever.

Amen.

Song: Love is the Golden Thread (by Katy Taylor)

The Dismissal

Closing Prayer

Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast
you feed us in this sacrament
with the food and drink of eternal life:
help us who have tasted your goodness
to grow in grace within the household of faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Great God, you are one God,
and you bring together what is scattered
and mend what is broken.
Unite us with the scattered peoples of the earth
that we may be one family of your children.
Bind up all our wounds
and heal us in spirit,
that we may be renewed as disciples of Jesus Christ,
our Master and Saviour.
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Anthem: Sweet is the Work, my God, my King – Esther Bersweden

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